

REMARKS

The Office Action dated November 23, 2004 has been reviewed and the Examiner's comments carefully considered. Claims 8 and 11 are amended, claims 13-15 are added and no claims are canceled. Thus, claims 2-15 are pending. Claims 2-7 are allowed. Claims 8-12 are rejected over the prior art. Reconsideration of the rejected claims is respectfully requested.

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,358,273 ("Onishi"). Claims 8-10 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Onishi. All the rejections should be withdrawn because Onishi fails to disclose teach or suggest the claimed invention. For example, Onishi fails to disclose teach or suggest an airbag including a rearward extending portion that includes an "opening formed therein" as called for in claims 8 and 11. The Examiner contends that the strap (4) of Onishi anticipates the claimed rearward extending portion. The Examiner does not dispute that Onishi fails to disclose an opening located in the strap. However, incredibly, the Examiner has taking the position that the spaces or gaps between the strap (4)a and the surrounding airbag panels anticipate the claimed opening. Specifically the Examiner states:

the rearward extending section [(#4)] includes an opening for allowing gas to pass between the chambers (#4 is a strap, thus allowing air flow on either side of the strap).

(Office Action at p. 3). The claims are clear that the rearward extending section includes an opening "formed therein." The gaps or spaces "on either side of the strap" are not formed in the strap. Thus, the rejection is completely without merit and should be withdrawn without further delay. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Each of claims 9, 10 and 12-14 depend from either claim 8 or 11 and are allowable therewith, for at least the reasons set forth above, without regard to the further patentable limitations contained therein.


New claim 15 depends from allowed claim 2 and, thus, is allowable therewith.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would expedite allowance of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____



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| SHOULD ADDITIONAL FEES BE NECESSARY IN CONNECTION WITH THE FILING OF THIS PAPER, OF IF A PETITION FOR EXTENSION OF TIME IS REQUIRED FOR TIMELY ACCEPTANCE OF SAME, THE COMMISSIONER IS HEREBY AUTHORIZED TO CHARGE DEPOSIT ACCOUNT NO. 19-0741 FOR ANY SUCH FEES; AND APPLICANT(S) HEREBY PETITION FOR ANY NEEDED EXTENSION OF TIME. |
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